

IMMEDIATE RELEASE, NOVEMBER 28, 1961

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE MEDAL PRESENTATION CEREMONIES  
OF ALLEN W. DULLES  
AT THE CIA BUILDING IN LANGLEY, VA.

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Mr. Dulles, Mr. McCone, General Cabell, Members of the Central Intelligence Agency:

I want, first of all, to express my appreciation to you all for the opportunity that this ceremony gives to tell you how grateful we are in the government and in the country for the services that the personnel of this Agency render to the country.

It is not always easy. Your successes are unheralded -- your failures are trumpeted. I sometimes have that feeling myself. But I am sure you realize how important is your work, how essential it is -- and how in the long sweep of history how significant your efforts will be judged.

So I do want to express my appreciation to you now, and I am confident that in the future you will continue to merit the appreciation of our country, as you have in the past.

I am also particularly grateful because this ceremony gives us all an opportunity to pay tribute to an outstanding public servant. Allen Dulles' career as a citizen of this country -- and as you know who has made his vast personal resources available to the country -- stretches all the way back to the administration of Woodrow Wilson. I know of no other American in the history of this country who has served in seven administrations of seven Presidents -- varying from party to party, from point of view to point of view, from problem to problem, and yet at the end of each administration each President of the United States has paid tribute to his service -- and also has counted Allen Dulles as their friend.

This is an extraordinary record, and I know that all of you who have worked with him understand why this record has been made. I regard Allen Dulles as an almost unique figure in the country. I know of no man who brings a greater sense of personal commitment to his work -- who has less pride in office -- than he has. And therefore I was most gratified when we were permitted today to come out to the Agency to present this award to him in your presence.

(then the President read the Citation)

ALLEN WELSH DULLES

is hereby awarded

THE NATIONAL SECURITY MEDAL

As principal intelligence advisor to the President of the United States, Mr. Dulles has fulfilled the responsibilities of his office with unswerving purpose and high dedication. His ten years of service in the Central Intelligence Agency have been the climax of a lifetime of unprecedented and devoted public service beginning in the First World War, and stretching through the administrations of seven Presidents.

The outstanding contributions Mr. Dulles has made to the security of the United States have been based upon a profound knowledge of the role of the intelligence officer, a broad understanding of international relations, and a naturally keen judgment of men and affairs. The zestful energy and undaunted integrity of his service to his country will be an enduring example to the profession he has done so much to create.

November 28, 1961

MR. DULLES' REMARKS

Mr. President, distinguished guests, and members of the Central Intelligence Agency:

I am deeply touched and deeply grateful for the words of the President and for the honor he has bestowed upon me. It is almost eleven years ago to a day that I came down to Washington at the behest, I might almost say the order, of Walter Bedell Smith, a very great general and a very great man and my predecessor. I was then practicing the law. Bedell called me up and said, "You have written a report on how this Agency should be run, you and a few others, and you had better come down here." Mr. President, that was eleven years ago and I am still here. It was in part the fascination of the work, the opportunities for service, and the indulgence and kindness of three Presidents, including President Kennedy, that have kept me on.

The Agency was then young, in its infancy. It is still fairly young, but, Mr. President, I feel that I can assure you that we have here today a corps of well trained men and women devoted to their country, to their service, and, Mr. President, to you as their Commander in Chief. I feel proud of them and I have been proud to have served with them, and to visit them in all the corners of the earth where they are working in the national interest. They are now looking forward to serving their new chief, John McCone, my old friend. To the Agency personnel here a word of thanks. We have known good times and bad, and as the President has just said, our successes are unsung and our failures are advertised.

I commend you to your new chief and I can do that with assurance, and I have commended him to you. Mr. President, as I close my work here I turn over my duties to Mr. McCone. I want to thank you for your constant support, help, and encouragement, for your understanding of the needs and the problems, and the possibilities of this Agency. I know I am leaving my work in good hands. I believe the future of this Agency and service to the country is one that is assured. And as I receive this medal I receive it, Mr. President, not really in a personal capacity, but I receive it for all of you because I know that in giving it to me he is giving it in a sense to all of the personnel of the Agency. My thanks, Mr. President.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

FOLLOWING IS AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT AND THE HONORABLE ALLEN W. DULLES

November 29, 1961

Dear Allen:

As you leave the office which you have held with such distinction, I am sure you know that you carry with you the admiration and affection of all of us who have served with you in the last ten years. I am glad to be counted among the seven Presidents in whose Administrations you have worked, and I am glad also that we shall continue to have your help and counsel as you return to the practice of the law.

You leave behind you, as a witness to your great service, an outstanding staff of men and women trained to the nation's service in the field of intelligence. Your own integrity, energy, and understanding will be a lasting example to them all.

Sincerely,

(s)  
John F. Kennedy

Honorable Allen W. Dulles  
Director  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington 25, D. C.

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November 28, 1961

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

In relinquishing my responsibilities as Director of Central Intelligence on November 29, 1961, I wish to express my appreciation for this opportunity to serve you and thus carry on an association begun under President Truman and continued under President Eisenhower.

You and your predecessors, since the organization of the Central Intelligence Agency in 1947, have shown a keen appreciation of the increasing importance of intelligence in the development of our national policy. I feel confident that under your direction my successor, Mr. John McCone, will be able further to fortify the role of intelligence as a major element of our national security.

Over the past fourteen years, we have developed in this Agency a corps of trained men and women in the field of intelligence. Their devotion to their work and to our country's welfare gives assurance that the tasks assigned to the Agency will be carried forward faithfully in the national interest.

Respectfully yours,

(s)  
Allen W. Dulles  
Director

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1961

STATEMENT BY ALLEN W. DULLES

I am returning to the practice of the law and will be "of counsel" to the firm of Sullivan and Cromwell of New York City. I had been a member of this firm for many years before joining the Central Intelligence Agency in November 1950.

This arrangement will permit me to devote time to writing and speaking on the issues of the day in the field of foreign affairs and particularly on the problems posed by the communist threat.

At the request of the President and of Mr. John A. McCone, I will make myself available as a consultant to my successor as he may wish.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE SWEARING-IN CEREMONIES  
OF  
JOHN McCONE AS DIRECTOR  
OF THE  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
(IN THE CABINET ROOM)

MR. McCONE: Mr. President, I very deeply appreciate the confidence you have expressed in me by this appointment. I will assure you that I will discharge this office to the very best of my ability. I am not unmindful of the very difficult task it will be, following in the footsteps of Allen Dulles, whose record in this area you so correctly and fully outlined yesterday.

However, I am encouraged and given hope by the fact that within the last few weeks I have come to know a great many people in the CIA, and I find them men and women of both great dedication and unusual ability -- and with their support I think that I can meet your expectations.

Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT: I want to say what an honor it is and what a pleasure it is to have Mr. McCone back in the national service.

This appointment, I think, that he was willing to take it, indicates how important it is, and how important I feel it is, as well as members of the Government and Members of Congress believe it to be.

He has not only the responsibility as Director of CIA, but also coordinating the work of all the Intelligence Community, and I know that he will give his attention to both these functions upon which so much of our security depends.

We want to welcome you here and to say that you are now living on the bull's eye, and I welcome you to that spot.